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This collection of writing engages with the sounding cultures of football as sonic spectacle; as auditory delight; as a source of visceral electrifying energy; as a means of locating, identifying and articulating ourselves as political subjects. The sounds of football are part of our daily lives. The ephemeral grassroots soundings of parish council pitches. The buzz of late night radio commentary. The roar of the crowd seeping out into the night and spreading like a firm mist across nearby streets. The on-pitch communication of the players—stick it in the mixer! Corner flags whipped into sound-making action by the breeze. The crack as a ball strikes the crossbar. The thud of football on boot then grass and soil as the goalkeeper sends it long downfield. The incessant voice of the popular media. The rattle of the line-marker and the slosh of paint as the pitch is marked out. The clatter of football boots on concrete or the sounds as they are struck together to remove mud. The resonant corridors of the stadium. Football talk at the pub—on the bus—in the cafe. The slam of plastic seats as the crowd stand—craning to see a corner. The conflict between the corporate stadium sound system and the oral culture of the Ultras. The cries of joy and despair. The referee’s whistle and the quiet calm—the void—of the stadium after the game, when the crowd has gone.

Paul Whitty  
17th May, 2018

# Laurence Crane

## *The Manor Ground*

Between 1925 and 2001 the Manor Ground was the home stadium for Oxford United Football Club. Founded in 1893 as Headington United, the club changed its name to Oxford United in 1960, a couple of years before being admitted to the Football League. The record attendance at the Manor was 22,750, for an FA Cup 6th round match against Preston North End on 29 February 1964, far exceeding the official capacity of 9,500. The Manor is also notable for being the ground that hosted Alex Ferguson's first match in charge of Manchester United, on 8 November 1986.

The ground had a reputation for being among the most dilapidated in the Football League and the safety recommendations of the Taylor Report, made in the 1990s in the wake of the Hillsborough disaster, were deemed too expensive to implement; it was cheaper to demolish the ground and move to a new stadium. The final match was on 1 May 2001, a 1-1 draw with Port Vale. After the ground was demolished, a private hospital was built on the site. Called The Manor Hospital, it is owned and operated by Nuffield Health. Visiting the area now, it is striking just how little of its previous history exists; if you did not know that there had once been a football ground on the site there is nothing visible there today to inform you of that fact.

Oxford United is my hometown club and I saw my very first game at the stadium in 1970, when I was just under 9 years old. I have written three texts detailing what I remember of the soundscapes of the Manor Ground; these texts are headed by the date and scoreline of three games that I actually attended, between 1970 and 1999. Although the main subject of the texts is the ground and its soundscapes, they also ended up being partly about the struggle of one's memory to properly remember details from the past and the way one ends up obsessing over the authenticity of these details.

Armed with a print out of my texts and a small portable recording device I travelled to Oxford on 5 April 2018 and sought out appropriate locations to record myself reading all three texts. These locations were based on a rough idea of where I stood or sat to watch the three matches that I had chosen. Each recording lasted just under two minutes. Later, I logged all the other sounds I could hear on the recordings and made a list of these, with exact timings. In the pages that follow, the texts are presented on the left hand side, with the sounds recorded while reading them documented on the right hand side.

Laurence Crane  
20 April, 2018

Oxford United 3 Bolton Wanderers 1  
28 February, 1970

I am standing outside number 28 Osler Road, in Headington, Oxford. The terraces on the Osler Road side of the Manor Ground were where I stood on my very first visit to the ground. I remember a small area of terracing, maybe 10-15 rows deep, which started at the end of a seated area just beyond the centre circle and continued right up to the corner flag at the intersection of the Cuckoo Lane and Osler Road sections of the ground. This area of terracing seemed more negotiable and less intimidating than the heavily packed London Road end. Pictures found on the internet remind me that over the years, as and when the club's finances would permit, this terracing on Osler Road was replaced by two small covered areas of seating. But in February 1970 it was very definitely uncovered and terraced. At this particular match, a sound that I clearly remember was my father stamping his feet sporadically on the terracing, trying to keep warm on what was a bitterly cold February afternoon. The Manor was a small, intimate ground and every sound seemed magnified, as if they were all being closely mic'd. I recall my first experience of the peculiarly resonant noise made by a football when being kicked professionally. A thud-like attack, with a small amount of reverb, seemed to fill the whole ground. Professional footballs kicked by professional football boots on the feet of professional footballers seemed to make a sound infinitely more sophisticated and exciting than I had heard in any amateur football.



Outside 28 Osler Road  
5th April, 2018

0'00" - 1'43" house sparrows

0'00" - 0'03" wood pigeon

0'36"                rustle of paper (my script)

0'58" - 1'04" footsteps of people walking past

1'17" - 1'20" voices of people walking past

1'35" - 1'43" cars (two vehicles)

Oxford United 0 Birmingham City 2.  
25 April, 1998

I am standing right outside the Manor Hospital, at the end of Beech Road. After a number of visits to see Oxford United as a child and teenager in the early 1970s, I did not attend a match at the Manor for over two decades, until I started to make occasional visits in the mid 1990s. The Beech Road side of the ground was directly opposite Osler Road and was dominated by a stand which took up around two thirds of that side of the ground. As you looked out over the pitch from the Beech Road stand, to the left was the large uncovered area of terracing at the Cuckoo Lane end, behind the goal. There was a clump of trees overlooking the Cuckoo Lane terracing and on windy match days these trees were quite noisy. I also remember crows—or, more likely, rooks—settling in the trees. The natural sounds of the wind through the trees and the squawking of the corvids made an interesting counterpoint to the usual anthropic soundscape of the football match; communal chanting; the shouts, cheers and boos as the crowd indicated pleasure or displeasure; the verbal communication between players; the crack of a particularly brutal tackle; the tannoy; the noise of the ball striking something inanimate, such as the post or the crossbar of the goal or an advertising hoarding. In my minds eye, these trees—and therefore the birds—were actually inside the ground. This is perhaps an example of the distortion of truth that the memory engages in long after an event, as a quick google image search shows that they were definitely outside the ground.

Outside the entrance to the Manor Hospital at the end of Beech Road  
5th April, 2018

0'00" - 1'48" car engine running

0'00" - 0'06" another car drives off

0'29" - 0'37" blackbird

0'30" - 1'05" intermittent breeze / light wind

1'12" - 1'26" car (passes at 1'20")

1'24" - 1'48" blackbird

1'25" - 1'48" car alarm in the distance

1'40" - 1'48" car passing

Oxford United 5 Stockport County 0  
9 May, 1999

I am again standing on Osler Road, this time outside number 18. During the pre-internet era a very prominent sound at football grounds was that of numerous transistor radios, sometimes tuned to the local radio commentary on the actual match being watched, as if the spectator needed verification of what he or she was witnessing with their own eyes. But mostly they were used to keep in touch with other matches being played at the same time around the country, matches whose result might affect the league or cup status of your club. The stadium tannoy would eventually give out these scores too but the tiny transistor radio seemed a quicker, more immediate way of acquiring the information. The cumulative sound of many radios was brash and tinny with lots of treble; what was being broadcast was not really properly audible unless you had the radio pressed right up to your ear, but the significance of what fans were hearing on the radio was indicated by the reactions around the ground as the information was collectively absorbed. Cheers. Groans. On the last day of the 1999 season there was no need to check the radio for details of how Oxford United's league position might be affected by other matches; the club had already been officially relegated to League Division Two and this fine performance against Stockport County was meaningless in terms of their position in the table. "It's just like watching Brazil" sang the home supporters as the final goal went in. If there was an unvoiced sound that day it was the huge communal sadness at the prospect of lower division football for the forthcoming season.

Outside 18 Osler Road  
5th April, 2018

0'00" - 1'49" house sparrows

0'12" - 0'15" voices of people walking past

0'12"            bicycle passing

0'14" - 0'26" car (passes at 0'22")

0'30" - 0'34" bicycle passing

0'45"            rustle of paper

0'52" - 1'08" car (passes at 1'04")

1'10" - 1'22" car going in the opposite direction (passes at 1'15")

1'16"            bicycle passing

1'28" - 1'42" car (passes at 1'35")

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Laurence Crane is a composer who was born in Oxford and now lives in London. His music is mainly written for concert performance, although his list of works includes pieces originally written for film, radio, theatre, dance, and installation. He has supported Oxford United since was 8 years old.

# Juliet Jacques

*Galatasaray vs. Bursaspor, 23 February 2018*

At home, I know all the songs. The ones that celebrate the best players in our current side, usually re-worked versions of the ones for stars long departed; the ones that hurl abuse at the opposing teams and their players, with the nastiest (and funniest) reserved for our local rivals, or the referee; and my favourites, the melancholy, sentimental, self-deprecating ones, or those that make the occasional slide into the surreal.

Increasingly, I'm not home or even away, but abroad. I always like to see a match when I travel, especially if whatever city or country I visit is famous for a fervent football culture. Then, it's songs I hear, just sound; I can only guess the content from the tone. (There are exceptions: in Ferrara in northern Italy, I watched local club SPAL, back in Serie A for the first time in fifty years. One of their midfielders smashed a 35-yard volley over the goal and the Ultras into the stand; the man behind me yelled "Tu non sei Roberto Carlos" and, after I laughed,

said, "You understood that." At Panathinaikos, my Greek friend explained during a particularly insipid display that the home fans were simply chanting "Fuck off".) In Istanbul, I took a break from the film festival I was judging to watch Galatasaray against Bursaspor in the Süper Lig. I first heard of Galatasaray in 1993, when Manchester United went to their Ali Semi Ten Stadium. The fans' flares and 'Welcome to Hell' banners looked intimidating in the newspapers but they couldn't capture the deafening hail of drums, claps and cheers, which the United players later said were terrifying to play amidst.

Twenty-five years later, Ruşen Çakır—a journalist who's taking me to the match—says it's not like that any more. Galatasaray moved to a far larger, or far less intimate, new stadium (with the obligatory corporate name) in 2011; around the same time, Turkey's increasingly autocratic leader, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, ruled that supporters had to register for an

ID card, Passolig, that would make it easier to bar ‘trouble-makers’ from the stadia. (The cards, incidentally, are provided by a bank owned by a member of Erdoğan’s family.)

This gentrification is familiar, and the Ultras I hear as we enter are more raucous than Premier League crowds, but nothing like the Galatasaray fans who became notorious in England during the 1990s. As we arrive, late, Galatasaray have just gone ahead, but we’ve missed the roar for the goal, and I notice the sounds of the match—the referee’s whistle, that comforting thud when a player strikes the ball. The crowd where I am, near the halfway line, don’t sing; they jeer when a decision goes against their team, or when a Galatasaray player tries and fails to take on an opponent when they could have passed, but mostly, they settle into that amiable, ambient noise recognisable to any football fan in any nation.

I listen out for the small group of away fans, high in one corner of the Türk Telecom stadium, but I hear nothing. It’s not so much that they are drowned out, more that they have nothing to cheer. After

38 minutes, Bursaspor centre-back William Troost-Ekong takes far too much time on the ball in front of his penalty area, loses it to Galatasaray’s playmaker Younès Belhanda and has no choice but to haul Belhanda down. The referee instantly sends Troost-Ekong off: the clarity of the red card, and the shared understanding that with the home team already ahead, this will likely mean an easy victory, produces a huge celebratory jeer, and chants that I take as the Turkish equivalent of “cheerio, cheerio, cheerio”. (Briefly, I think about when the English FA stopped using cards, and how much fans must have missed the intense reactions that came with the simultaneous realisation that the dynamic of a game had shifted.)

Galatasaray narrowly miss from the resulting free-kick; the home fans, sensing blood, raise the volume and tempo. Moments later, their team hit the bar and the post, before Garry Rodrigues doubles the lead. This provokes two things I loathe about modern football: goal music, as if the fans don’t know to cheer when their team scores; and the announcer yelling the scorer’s first name so

the crowd respond with the surname. Unlike the Süper Lig's many foreigners, Turkish players are known by their first names, confusing matters when Bursa-born Serdar Aziz makes it 3-0, and I hear it twice more, as the second and third goals of Bafétimbi Gomis' hat-trick punctuate the happy sounds of supporters who know their team are coasting to a big win.

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Juliet Jacques (b. Redhill, 1981) is a writer and filmmaker. She has published two books, mostly recently *Trans: A Memoir* (Verso, 2015), and her short fiction, essays and journalism have appeared in many publications, including *The Guardian*, *Granta*, *Frieze* and *Sight & Sound*. She lives in London and holds a season ticket at Norwich City.



# Darren Luke

## *'We Need Voices!': The Ritual of The Talking*

When I'm taking photographs of grassroots football it's one of the few times I enter the mythical 'zone', senses focused entirely on what's going on before me, the rest of the world elsewhere. Obviously I'm concentrating visually, but when there's a break in the game I can switch that attention off. When you find yourself stood there, purposeless, you begin to notice the sounds; a lull in the breeze; the ripple of a linesman's flag; the sharper snap of a corner flag in the wind; the crash of a wayward ball through foliage. This is what you take in when you're located in a field with your thoughts.

Yet always the dominant sound is the voices of the players. I don't know much about acoustics but sometimes, depending on the weather and the terrain, those voices—'winners!', 'blue head on this!', 'back door!', 'gamble!'—can fill the air around.

'We need voices!', always. And the horsepower behind those voices is always one question: 'Where's the

talking?', and the acceptance that The Talking is a crucial part of the team's performance. To admit that 'We've gone quiet!' is to question the very soul of the team.

This is language stripped down to the functional. In sociolinguistics it's a register, a language variety associated with a particular activity, or a professiolect, designed to convey thoughts in a precise and effective manner. But where does it come from? How does it spread and evolve? How does it differ across region, time and playing standard?

We know that someone, somewhere, probably in one of those medieval village 'mob' games, must have been the first person to shout 'man on!'. The ur-shout. Economic, informative, it would surely have caught on quickly. But with a hotchpotch of different versions of the game across the country there must have been diverse versions of The Early Talking.

When the Victorians codified the game, allowing geographically distant teams to play each other, there presumably would have followed a cross-pollination of languages. As styles of play developed within the new laws, language became more homologous. Such is the uniformity of The Talking today that there are resources designed to introduce foreign language speakers to concepts such as ‘asking questions’ of the opposition and ‘time!’ (which is handily described as ‘the opposite of man on’).

But has an equivalent register evolved in different parts of the football-playing world? Will a gobby French gardien, as a well-beaten opposition prepare to restart after conceding yet another, be bellowing ‘Encore zéro-zéro! Nous allons encore!’? There are surely also quality-specific versions of match talk. At some higher level of the game, the park goalkeeper’s yell of ‘no bounce!’, for example, would presumably be redundant. And while we might be aware of the famous teams and players of the past, we don’t know what they had to say for themselves on the pitch. We’re unlikely to ever know which examples of The Talking

have become extinct through the whims of fashion, gone the way of the magic sponge.

Yet if match talk is affected by fashion, then it’s also an inherently conservative language. How hard it must be to come up with a new phrase that sticks, even with your immediate teammates. Naturalists have shown that there are dialects and unique phrases in songbirds according to location. The older birds don’t take the younger ones aside and teach them, but the youngsters learn by example. So while a kid playing in a park may imitate a famous player’s goal celebrations or quirky way of wearing socks, they’re only learning the language by being within it, playing alongside older players.

I would argue that ‘man on’ and ‘the opposite of man on’ are the only two genuinely helpful bits of The Talking. At this level it’s that two-second gap between ‘Time!’ and ‘Get Rid!’ that best captures the flavour of sport played in a state of controlled panic. Hence most match talk seems primarily to stress the urgency of getting the ball as far away as possible as quickly as possible. The rest is just

a background hum of motivational white noise.

And maybe that's its real function. An incessant, comforting, ritualised yap, just to remind everyone that they're not out there on their own, and we're all in it together.

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Darren Luke has for several years been photographing the landscapes of grassroots football in Cornwall. His work has appeared in *When Saturday Comes* magazine and websites such as *inbedwithmaradona* and *pkfoot*.

# Steven Matthews

## *GRASSROOTS MATCH-NOTES*

-45'

The thock of the lock on the transport container.

-44'.55"

Clunk of heavy catches swung  
back on doorsides,  
iron on steel,  
harsh run of doors through their grooves.  
Jack-knife clatter as the giant wings span their full extent.

-44'.50"

Hollow throng of rubber trolley wheels  
over thick metal container floor,  
whack of metal trolley-handle  
dropping down.  
Flat drag of kit shifted across shelves.

-44'.35"

Fishing-boat scatter of nets flung  
on wood trolley-boards,  
coins-dropped-in-bus hail-fall  
at net-pegs grabbed down from the shelving;  
hollow plastic clunk in the barrier-bag,  
and plastic scream of barrier-tape reel lifted  
by its handle.

-40'

Predictable burst of bird-song around  
at sudden sun-blast over the field beyond  
the pitches. Sparrows in there,  
blackbirds, maybe far lark chitter.

Silent gyring of two red kites  
surveilling a horizon-line hedgerow.

-38'.30"

Squawk of trolley wheels  
rustling long grass  
down the slope from container to pitch,  
last swish as they clear long tufts  
of rough and the wheels run smooth.  
Net drag over trolley-side, regular  
clank of pegs on their net-nest.

-37'

Boot-studded step on plastic chair to raise nets  
to winged cross-bar clips,  
dull ping as net-ropes clip.

-36'.30"

Ting of plastic net-retainers at goal-posts,  
swift run of net-threads between prongs,  
steady knock of hammer on pegs  
drawing the net into goal shape.

-33'

And again at the other end; then  
pacing and hammering and threading  
creating the sacred barriers of respect.

-30'.1"

Strained pull of chains by bike-pedals,  
rapid run of bike wheels across grass paths,  
fling of heavy bikes onto turf outside  
the pitch, unclipping of helmet straps.

Rise of chatter as footballs wrestled  
from tight-threaded cloth bag are  
thumped towards the empty nets.  
Slither of ball down net-back,  
shouts and curses as balls sail past  
to roll and still in thick grass beyond.

-29' to -10'

Pacing, and bright pastel cones' pock forming  
training square, squad called in,  
rustle-onto-ground-sound of coloured bibs.

(Opposition here. Ref trots over, ruffles nets.)

Runs and warm-up jumps,  
football tossed into pack, few calls for it,  
they are not focused today...  
Talk of parties last night, laughter, talk  
of online matches, few calls for the ball still,

but more running, more silence,  
more intense pound of boots on turf,  
as the rhythm of the session begins  
to take over, more concerted scarper

across the square, moves into and from  
the defined box.

-2'

Ring of spin of coin for captains,  
shrill whistleblast calls teams to  
position, chatter dies away as focus  
suddenly clears, another shrill whistle,  
claps of encouragement.

0'

Come ons burst from several lips, the ball skitters backwards.

1'

Clash of boot against boot, first tackles  
spectators' bays of disappointment as first  
shots drift wide. Ferret for ball amidst  
hedge-branches, dredges of ball from small stream ...

21'

Till, from out of nowhere,  
the air changes jubilant at

rifle of ball from boot long shot  
dings inner post and twists,  
ever-so-softly, into net.  
The small crowd rises, praises, urges to go again.

33'

Thump of heavy tackles now, pitch churning up,  
duller land of mud-laden ball from high kicks,  
from its meetings with foreheads. Ricochets,  
calls for the pass, showings, scurries down the wing,  
shrill whistlebursts after bodies  
collide or pole-axe to earth. Confusing shouts at corners,  
struck ball arrows over, bodies knock,  
flutter of lino's swift flagging, ref  
calling throws, goal-kicks, free-kicks,  
paces out walls, speaks quietly to foul-ers.

47'

This is getting gruelling, bogged. Three  
quick ref's blasts bring relief. Pants of breath  
lessening. A few opinions offered, but mostly  
coaches' voices speak across the gap to

the semi-circled squad hunkered on the ground.  
More encouragement, whack of slaps on backs.

45+

Attrition. Heavy bump of boots on  
heaving ground, ball running too  
fast or too slow, out-eruptions of annoyance  
from players, silence of spectators still  
sipping at half-time coffees. Ref's voice  
louder, cross now at persistent offenders,  
threatening, sharper, knife-quick in comment.

59'

Yet another corner, odd tiring quiet from  
players; but bounce, crack of shot,  
echo-back as ball thuds defender,

slide-in and joy-shout as attacker  
slips ball into net-corner, staggers up, reels away,  
slapped and patted and hugged,  
back to the centre.

Relief. Relax. Coaches' shouts heard less,  
but ramping the volume again as the home  
cross-bar rings long and  
trembles at  
header from opponent centre-forward.

Let this be over now. Sigh  
of wind suddenly elapses across  
the far fields, nears, rustle in trees, then longer,  
larger breath and first spatter  
of rain-shower. Canvas cover-over  
of kit, subs told to wrap up, sleeves  
pulled back to snatch glance at watches,  
the play by now a kind of hallucination  
of quieter and louder  
ball-clumps, soft and hard,

calls, commiserations, contentions,  
clashes-together, chipped passes.

90'

The long whistleblast brings cheer,  
well-dones, thanks, scuffle of wet kit  
together.

Then the sound reels from  
opening sequence in reverse:

flags released from soft earth,  
clank of net-clips in breeze  
on posts, wrestle of net-pegs from soil,  
the ring of sodden net-ropes  
from crossbar clips, damp fling

of nets on trolley, barrier piled on,  
slithering walk of trolley wheels



back up the slope to container.

110'+

All tidied. Nets, flags, pegs,  
poles, tape-reel clapped back on metal shelves,  
squeal of trolley and heavy clang  
to rest it on side on floor.

Wince of door retaining-handles, slam  
of bars by cold hands into supports,  
metal-on-metal slide of padlocks  
through holes, snicked click  
of the closing lock into place—

the transport container lock thocks.

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Steven Matthews was born at Colchester Essex. He has been a regular reviewer of poetry for magazines including Poetry Review, London Magazine, and the TLS; he has been poetry editor for Dublin Quarterly. He has published two books of poems, 'Skying' (Waterloo Press, 2012), and 'On Magnetism' (Two Rivers Press, 2017). A critical-creative project on Wordsworth, 'Ceaseless Music', was published by Bloomsbury in 2017.





# Patrick Tubin McGinley

*36,000 for Madrid: Recorded on the 14th of March, 2004 at White Hart Lane, before a match between Tottenham Hotspur and Newcastle United*

I was a bit ill that day, I recall. But a friend had invited me to White Hart Lane, and I had never been to a football match, not exactly being a sports fan myself. I decided to go, partly, although not exclusively, because it gave me a chance to record the sounds of a new environment, new at least to me. I admit that recording urban crowds was not, and still isn't, my greatest interest as a phonographer, but an opportunity is an opportunity.

The details that stick out most in my mind are the contrasts to my experiences attending baseball games in my childhood at Boston's Fenway Park. First, the atmosphere was not friendly. There was a scent of violence in the air, and the visiting fans were confined to what looked like a cage, not far from where we were seated. Also, if I recall correctly, no alcohol was available, unheard of at a baseball game. So I sipped my tea, watched the cage, and listened to the taunts and songs and cheers reverberate around the ground.

It was completely unexpected when the announcer asked us to stand and observe a minute's silence, in memory of those killed and injured by the bomb blasts in Madrid a few days earlier. I distinctly remember the rumble of 36,000 people getting to their feet, and I will never forget the breathtaking sensation of being among 36,000 people unaccustomed to, but attempting to maintain, silence.

Of course it was nothing like a full minute, and it was nothing close to silent. In the recording, voices can be heard losing their patience within 30 seconds of the whistle blowing; by 40 the tension is close to explosion; and by 47 the referee clearly decides to cut his losses and give the crowd the relief they crave, before they take it themselves, by blowing his whistle to officially mark the end of the 'minute'.

But even at 47 seconds, this 'minute' felt, and feels in the recording, long. I'm always amazed by what

concentration can do to the perception of time, and amazed by what the act of recording a situation can do to concentration. Many phonographers report that perception of sonic environment, detail, and activity is heightened by the simple act of hitting the record button, whether or not monitoring headphones are being worn. It's as if making the choice and placing the frame allow us to hit an internal button along with the external one, to initiate a breathtaking heightened level of perception. For many years it has been my goal to eliminate the external stimulus and attain this level of attentive listening without the need of machines.

So what do we hear? In these 47 seconds we hear the intention of 36,000 people. We hear their movement, we hear the usually masked sounds of a stadium, we hear the city in the background. We hear what seems to be, with the volume raised, a light rain, the shifting of fabric and wooden stands and architecture under the weight of 36,000 bodies. We hear the sound of 72,000 ears hearing the sound of 36,000 bodies without voices. We also hear the tension of 36,000 voices not prepared

to remain passive. We have the sensation of a rollercoaster, climbing slowly to the top of the grade, approaching the peak, cresting it, and with the sound of the whistle exploding towards the first valley. 36,000 voices releasing in one go all the tension that has built up in those 47 seconds, that would have been released gradually over the course of that minute if societal convention hadn't demanded participation in a communal act. Maybe it is this somehow involuntary compulsion towards the communal that makes the hair stand up on the back of my neck still every time I hear this recording.

And come to think of it, maybe it wasn't me who was sick. Maybe it was my companion that day who almost cancelled, but decided against it (he was a proper football fan). Our experiences have blended together in memory, another inadvertently communal act. But I hear us both there, and can still feel either his sickness or mine, and for some reason I always picture birds flying across the pitch when I listen, and I don't know if that is a visual memory, an audible clue, or just my imagination.

One last thing: in double-checking White Hart Lane's capacity just now, I discovered that in May, 2017, less than a year ago, White Hart Lane was closed and demolished. I'm sure this wouldn't have been news to me had I still been living in North London, but I left the city, and the country, in 2006. So this recording now takes on a new dimension, that of a historical document of another lost sacred (for some) space, lost in time, but preserved here for 47 seconds of not-silence.

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Patrick Tubin McGinley (AKA murmer) is a sound, performance, radio and film artist based in Estonia. His work is about small discoveries and concentrated attention, focusing on the unnoticed but extraordinary sounds that surround us. He works with spaces, objects, resonances and people in composition, performance or simply collective action, in the exploration of perception via attentive listening.

*\*Please visit the Sound-Diaries website to listen to Patrick's field recording.*

# Ruth Potts

## *Football*

“Make a U-turn” commands the weary voice of my Satnav—it does not add: you are in the midst of nowhere. A sodden field at the edge of a dribble of village. The car doors creak, gaping-open before we’ve stopped moving, and they are gone. I can hear their urgent diminishing foot-thuds, a clutch of boy-running as my charges take their sucking leave, half flying, half stumbling, towards the pitch. I hear the wind breach the car’s bubble of interior, now ragged, with back door hinges creaking wide. I try to park with doors still open, a whistle of weather assuring me that I am here now, no more radio, no more warmth.

I ratchet the handbrake, slam the three (four, five) doors shut with a final longing glance at the stillness of the car with no-one in it. Then I trudge, boots heavy with last week’s filth to some square bareness.

If I close my eyes on that long, long walk to the farthest pitch, I could be in the Urals or the Hindu Kush—some strange and barren land, thousands of miles wide, awe-inspiring blowing. I leave the rustles and squeaks of hedgerow and tree cover to push against a wind (ALWAYS a wind). A wordless pilgrimage with others, all of us pulling flapping jackets around us, and trying to do up zips like lighting matches, hopeful of warmth, and frustrated.

Now the only sound seems to be the bath-running, pan-boiling loudness of the wind, which would be so blissful if it would stop. Other mothers, fathers, grandads march on, and I follow, towards the mute beacon, three pitches away from my son’s team. Tiny specks of impossible orange. I know they are shouting to one another but I feel like a hungry crow, turning my head for a scrap of their sound and coming back hungry.

At last I come to this rectangle of familiarity—child-prattle and coach-calls mix with my fellow outposters—greetings and the turn of a thermos cup lid. Those smart enough to have brought coffee let vacuum bubbles announce their superiority whilst I listen for the whip-crack of the gazebo where squeaky polystyrene cups will soon minister to the unprepared with lukewarm tea (the sound of 50p change in a tin box).

The whistle comes and the kids grow quiet. There are a few choice calls from the coaches, their urgent shrill making me feel quite embarrassed, as if I were hearing a heart reveal its cares. The parents' swelling hum—of glee and good grace in almost equal measure—curls around me.

I am included simply by listening to their calls. There is laughter and sometimes a whistle and lots of instructions shouted that I only vaguely understand. Get it away, Yours, **YOURS!** Get it back. The cadence of these is like a music hall show—there is threat and outrage and humour and melancholy, all in the space of a 20 minute half.

Then, sometimes, there is quiet for a moment, like the time it takes for a glass to slip from your hand, or the wave to gather and crash—a collective in-breath, a beat of quiet and then release: And again Lucas, Mark your man Aiden, Look, he wants it!

These waves build and pause and break successively—like shells tossed through them there is the one word that unites us all—in U10 football, a sanctified ringing, a choir-like chorus of any number of voices: Unlucky!

I love this word—I love hearing it from the pursed lips of Ryan, whose knees can't take the pace any more but who once thought he'd be a pro. He knows how his son will listen for it. I love hearing it from Nathan's mum, because Nathan's had a bad week with the bullies and she's raising herself up above the wind to tell him she loves him. I love hearing it from Simon, a French polisher who has settled for less, and is generous with it, even to Andrew who doesn't pass.



Is it 3-4 or 4-3? I ask my neighbour as the whistle blows, and she shrugs, I think we lost. We laugh at our collective inefficiency in keeping score, and begin the long trail back to the car park.

I call it myself to the lone figure in the goal, impossibly small against the net. My voice is near hysterical with hope, commiseration, defiance, when a ball thuds past his brave hands, his bursting heart.

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Ruth Potts is surprised to find herself living in a small town in Oxfordshire with a husband and three young boys. She tries to fit in working at a local bookshop and a research clinic between sporting fixtures for the under 10s.

# Lauren Redhead

## *Alty*

Supporting a non-league club sounds different to supporting a team in the Football League. Mention of the club's name brings to mind the many sounds of supporting Altrincham FC, currently in the Evo Stik Premier League (the National League North). Each week an average of 1000 Altrincham FC fans strive to compete with the noise of bigger games.

The ground's PA system has seen better days, garbling the announcements and polluting the sound of the players' musical introduction with the flapping and whining of its broken speaker cones. The official 'sound' of Altrincham is Radio Robins, the 'online voice of Altrincham FC'. Radio Robins streams the sound of the fans' chants on match day; these are not always musically distinct to Altrincham. They range from the seasonal 'walking in an Alty wonderland' to the diminished, descending, broken triad of 'come on, Alty'. These melodies are shared from club to club, such that on New Year's day 'come on, Alty' and 'come on, Witton' blended into each other seamlessly; the enthusiasm of the home fans simultaneously drowning out and augmenting that of the away fans. Radio Robbins broadcasts echo the technical interferences of the ground, their commentator garnering the review from listener Trent Sainsbury, 'about two minutes in you sounded like a robot from the Smash advert'

From the pitch, to which one is always in close proximity at the ground, one hears the shouting of Altrincham's manager Phil Parkinson and goal keeper Tony Thompson clearly. Sounds from the pitch, the 'ping' of the long ball—and the 'thud' as, on boxing day, it lands on a waterlogged patch of mud—are easily heard from the main stand, peppered by the sound of pouring rain as the players battle on in an increasing blanket of fog. The crowd, cheering Jordan Hulme (top scorer for 2017-18), and the many enthusiastic young supporters who contribute 'cheater', and 'you're rubbish', can be heard along Moss Lane. 2017-18 is in sharp contrast to Altrincham's previous season in the National League North, when they finished bottom of the table with 21 points after a mere 4 wins

and 9 draws. Then, the terraces were quiet or rumbled with the sound of disappointment and dissatisfaction.

‘Alty couldn’t buy a win’ I heard someone say during their 2016 boxing day defeat to FC United of Manchester [‘ɒlʔi kən? baɪ æ wɪn’].

Alty [ɒlʔi] is the sound that defines Altrincham for me. At school, it was forbidden: pupils were asked to leave the classroom and contemplate the consequences of not saying ‘Altrincham’ properly. In contrast, Alty proudly display this word on their socks! It is a defining imprint of an accent that is not quite my own: my Liverpudlian parents, and sojourn in Leeds for the best part of 10 years, mean this particular North West sound doesn’t quite match my accent any more. My job—in a Southern university—often finds me softening my speech for students and colleagues, and at events such as conferences. Perhaps this softening reflects the internalised fears of someone whose parents had enforced elocution lessons at school, and who frequently encounters people who don’t follow the Manc run-together mix of over-enunciated consonants, glottal-stops and half-mumbled vowels that characterise this part of the North West. Internally, ‘Alty’ is still a part of my identity.

The choice to eschew speaking in my accent is often unconscious: I wish to own and to proudly foreground it, thus signalling my heritage in my daily life in the South East, but it often doesn’t come naturally to the tip of my tongue. Alty FC is a place where it does so. I mostly support Altrincham FC vicariously, usually through the internet, but each time I read and sub-vocalise ‘Alty’ I am reminded of home. This word conjures up the sounds in the ground, sitting in the terrace or standing near the corner flag on my infrequent visits to home games, but also a regional identity that I frequently only experience through my football club: Alty.

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Lauren Redhead is a composer of experimental music, a performer of music for organ and electronics, and musicologist who focuses on the aesthetics as socio-semiotics of music.

# David Tidoni

*Q&A with Paul Whitty*

*Q: (Paul Whitty)*

The oral grassroots sound-culture of Ultras like Brescia 1911 seems at odds with the way that football clubs want to present themselves and their sounding environment. How have the clubs tried to impose their own sound-culture on matchdays?

*A: (Davide Tidoni)*

I have no experience with big clubs. My experience is mainly related to second division Ultras groups. Perhaps my observations could be extended to other cities but I don't feel comfortable talking about groups I have no direct experience with. For this reason I would prefer to focus my response on what's happening in Brescia and particularly the group Brescia 1911.

The stadium's auditory environment is mainly controlled by the state and police force and not directly by the club itself. The club passively accepts orders and regulations coming from above as the primary aim of the club is to maximize sports commercialisation and fan consumerism.

The club's range of actions within the sounding environment of the stadium is more related to radio music and commercial advertisements played back before and after the game as well as during intermissions. If compared to other European stadiums—where you have sound effects in combination with actions on the pitch, direct amplification from the pitch, etc—this is not an extreme situation but still interesting to discuss as it shares the same vision of the future-generation stadium model.

To put it briefly, broadcast music and advertisements are designed to psychologically displace fans from their active role as engaged performers.

Ultras don't go to the stadium to listen to advertisements but to perform.

They participate and use the stadium as a space where they can express themselves. Music today is played back in every commercial space but in a football stadium, where the social dimension is so strong, music works as a domestication strategy and expropriates the Ultras of their own social space.

I have an example about this; I remember an away match in 2008 where the 1911 arrived quite early before the game and positioned themselves inside the stadium. Local fans were already on their stand and members of the 1911 started provoking them. The locals responded and began an extemporary battle where the groups tested each other creating/adapting/choosing chants best suited for the situation. At a certain point, in order to quiet the battle, somebody from the stadium turned on the local radio played through the main PA system so that the groups had to stop competing as they could not hear each other anymore.

Another example is from a match I saw in 2012 in Florence where they used 'Enter Sandman' from Metallica as the kick-off song intended to create some kind of spectacle atmosphere and shared enthusiasm. So pathetic... they tried to trigger excitement and emotional tension within the crowd by playing back a song that filled out the whole space and alienated people, excluding them from participating. Nobody from the public would ever choose to sing 'Enter Sandman'. The playback of that song shifted the context of the environment into a fictional framework detached from the actual conditions of the situation. This model is a top-down strategy developed with the purpose of creating consensus and manipulating sentiment. The audience is distanced from the real and their participation is reduced to a shallow cultural consumerism void of their own unique forms of input and collaboration.

*Q:*

How have Ultras adapted to legislation that banned drums and megaphones from stadia in 2007 and to other security measures?

A:

They were forced to adapt. Since 2007 there has been an increased expansion of repressive measures on football grounds. I say repressive because they were ostensibly designed to ensure safety and quality standards and their real aim was to limit supporters' activities and their potential growth. Here are the main limitations and the way they changed Ultras' ways of organising sound.

1) Drums and megaphone ban—without megaphone and PA system it's very difficult to coordinate large groups of fans as well as stimulate and influence the general public. The lack of drums means absence of a clear reference beat. This situation weakens the unity of the group and the capacity to keep the tempo and sing together on the same beat. As a consequence of this instability, chants increased speed, some of them even doubled their original tempo and turned into a condensed structure quite difficult to sing aloud. Some chants changed speed so drastically that when the Ultras sing them with the drums outside the stadium they are completely lost and can't figure out what's wrong between voices and drums.

2) Banners and choreographies ban—only banners and choreographies that are approved by the police are allowed inside the stadium. This means the police force has the power to examine and censor how the groups choose to exhibit their support. This ban is not only limiting freedom of speech but also reduces unique forms of expression. When exhibited within the stadium, choreographies and banners need to be coordinated in advance. By banning those activities you suppress people's initiative to organize themselves collectively. You change their position from actually doing something and being useful to the group to “unemployed” and displaced from their roles as contributors to the game.

3) Tessera del tifoso (fan ID card)—another exercise in state control that arrived on the scene in 2010-2011. According to this measure, supporters who haven't subscribed to the Tessera can't buy tickets for away matches. Try to understand what it means for a group to not attend away matches...

It means to lose spirit and stop sharing time that was usually the occasion for creating new chants. In this way the chant repertoire stops flowing. In addition to this you can imagine that if a group can't attend away matches, it means that local supporters will find themselves alone at the stadium without an opportunity to sing against the visitors and compete with them.

4) Daspo—banning order issued by the police, not magistrates. Daspo has become an instrumental strategy for controlling certain groups that, compared to others, are more critical towards the club and feel particularly close to socio-political issues. The Daspo has repeatedly been issued to specific persons with the clear aim to remove them from the group and undermine the group's inner structure. When the people who are in charge of starting the chants get a ban it's difficult to find others who can replace them. New leaders need charisma, empathy, communication skills, humility, and the capacity to read and respond to the game. It's always important to share responsibilities amongst the group so that if a particular member gets a ban, the group can reorganise and continue with ease.

Being restricted by controlling measures, both in terms of personal access and means of sound production, supporters begin to perceive the stadium as an obstructive environment to any sense of community. They are seemingly cut off ... with less interaction from the visiting supporters, fewer shared memories amongst the group, fewer connections with the club and the team, and fewer possibilities to actually engage in significant actions that would generate genuine enthusiasm and energy. The overall spirit of the shared space is diminished and the context within which the chants are realised is contracted and stifled.

The measures described above combined with the football club's managerial incompetence make the situation in Brescia quite unhappy. It's unbelievable how the 1911 still attend games and find energy to contest modern football and police repression.

Q:

Will the singing end?

A:

What I see today is a clear attempt to erase the stadium as a space for practicing collective free speech. How the chants will adapt, I am not sure, but the songs are at risk of losing criticality and may begin to reflect dominant cultural agendas designed by the football industry in accordance with the state. The opportunity for the groups to voice their shared subjective existential protest is at risk.

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Davide Tidoni is a researcher in the field of sound and listening. He is interested in the relational dimension of listening and the uses of sound in everyday life. With a particular emphasis on observation, action and participation, he has created works that include site-specific interventions, live performances and audio recording projects.



# Duncan Whitley

## *From Highfield Road to Parada de Ester*

I must have been late arriving at the ground. Usually I'd head from Pool Meadow bus station, straight up Raglan Street then you'd do a little dog-leg onto Britannia Street and take a left onto King Richard Street. Past "Snack Attack" on the corner of Mowbray Street and the entrance to the Main Stand was in front of you, "Welcome to Coventry City F.C." in white lettering on sky blue signage, fixed to the red-brick facade of the stadium. To get to the West Terrace, you had to take a left onto Wren Street alongside the railings, and after a few yards turn right into an alleyway leading up to the turnstiles. On this occasion I was late, and I hadn't taken my usual route into the dense maze of terraced houses surrounding Highfield Road. You could hear the buzz of the crowd as kick-off time approached, the sounds emanating from the stadium were floating about the rooftops, effervescent and elusive. Momentarily something changed dramatically in the sound. Looking to my right, I was passing a small,

brick archway where a door had been left open to a back-yard. The crowd became astonishingly present, the street transformed. It was nothing more than an instant, and I always hoped to stumble across that experience again but it never happened.

*Take me home to Highfield Road,  
To the place I belong!  
The West Terrace to see the City,  
Take me home Highfield Road!*

Once inside the ground the architecture of sound is radically changed: that enigmatic, spectral sound coming from one direction and then the next as you navigated the inner-city streets surrounding the ground, now transformed into a more stable, embodied architecture. For most of that season I sat in the West Terrace, above and behind the goal and a little to the left. From that perspective the banter with the visiting support to the left was always intense, and on a good day you could get a "conversation" going with the support in the East

Stand across the length of the pitch. When I listen back to the binaural recordings from those games, I'm transported back there. I don't necessarily recall the faces but I do recognise the voices around me, and listening to them I can sometimes picture with clarity what was happening on the pitch: midfielder Michael Doyle sliding to the touchline with his opposite number in a headlock, a swift punch to the head as if performed for the West Terrace but miraculously out of the sight of the referee; skipper Stephen Hughes turning to applaud us with gloved hands at the end of the Stoke match, having been forced into an impromptu performance between the sticks when goalkeeper Ian Bennett was sent off for a hand-ball outside the penalty box; much-derided defender Steve Staunton's unlikely wonder-goal in the 82nd minute to win against fellow relegation contenders Brighton...

*Super, Super Steve! Super, super Steve!  
Super, Super Steve! Super Stevie  
Staunton! Hahaha text your dad,  
Staunton's just scored! ... There's  
only one Stevie Staunton! One Stevie  
Staunton! Walking along, singing  
a song, walking in a Staunton  
wonderland! There's only one...*

From Coventry to the small, rural town of Parada de Ester in central Portugal. The Stadium of Our Lady of Fátima is located up a short climb from the village, overlooked by a stone cross. There is no stadium as such, just a sand pitch surrounded by a low wall, a humble club house located to one side. Carved into the mountainside, the ground looks down towards the winding, eucalyptus-covered valley of the river Paiva. It is home to amateur club Grupo Desportivo de Parada, hosting their matches in the regional Divisão de Honra.

The team train at the ground on week nights. We would usually arrive a little early, the waning glow of the October sun behind the São Macário mountain giving way to cool evening and the synthesizer tones of stridulating crickets. Paulo is also there early, laying out the cones. As the players arrive, the night transforms with the energy of their amicable banter. When the drills begin the voices become focused and intense. The anarchic rhythms of balls scuffling across the hard ground belie the abstract geometry of the training exercises, carried out in pairs and in threes across the pitch. Paulo's whistle cuts through at intervals of

a minute, like a steady pulse giving structure to the sessions (change!). The sounds of the players' exhalations in the now moist night air mark the tempo and intensity of the drills. In one moment, listening through the choreographed drills taking place on the sand pitch, the most ethereal of sounds becomes apparent, as if an apparition: the melody of "Our Lady of Fátima – the Thirteenth of May" drifts on the edges of audibility on the wind, rendered in electronic chimes and modulated by the natural forms of the landscape...

*What are we doing here? You have to make a figure of eight I think. You pass four times, and then we swap. One, two, three, four... [Whistle] Come on Mota, come on. Let's go! Like this, tik-tik-tik-tik, quick touches! Let's go Gemeo! One, two, three, four... Good, good, let's go! One, two, three, four... [Whistle] Change!*

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Duncan Whitley (b.1974) is an artist and sound recordist, working at the intersections of contemporary visual and sound art, with a particular focus on experimental moving-image and spatial sound work. He has presented site-specific projects, audiovisual works, and sound installations in the UK, Europe, Asia and South America.

# Paul Whitty

*Elland Road, LS11 0ES*

1.

*24th October 1979*

*Withleigh - Devon*

I am listening to commentary from Universitatea Craiova v Leeds United on Medium Wave. I am alone. My brother is asleep. It is the second round of the UEFA Cup. The radio is under my pillow - muffled. The signal comes and goes – coated with interference from who knows where as the Ionosphere recedes. Leeds attack - looking for a way back into the match. White noise blooms and saturates all frequencies. Words merge one into another before being extinguished by the wave that breaks; retreats; returns. The noise of the crowd swells as if someone has engaged the hyper-metal pedal; and then phases as if the stadium is being twisted on its axis before the static recedes and there is clarity. Everything is in motion; the stadium moves into earshot but doesn't stop; rushing towards us. Too close now it has to retreat. The materiality of the event is in question. Leeds are still two goals down; that much is clear. The airwaves cannot tell me the story that I wanted to hear. I cannot find the frequency of the radio station that will tell me that Leeds have overturned the first leg deficit and will be in the draw for the third round; the sounds I am looking for do not have solidity; there are no airborne traces of this possible reality. The twisting, phasing, trembling static of the radio is one of the many sounds of the night; the barn owls; the creaking attic timbers; the shimmering passage of a car on the rain-soaked asphalt skin of the A373. I change frequencies; switch the radio on and off; turn it from left to right and back again looking for a stronger signal; occasionally there is contact; a clear line of site between Craiova and Withleigh. I don't hear the final whistle; it skitters away across the ionosphere; engulfed by a rolling wave that i cut off at its height as I turn the dial that doubles as an on-off switch and volume control. There is a febrile pop as the speaker is silenced and I am left with the familiar sound of the wind turning the row of conifers that lines the garden into a fine mist of white noise.

2.

*July 8th 1981*

*April 21st 2018*

*Elland Road - Leeds*

As late as the nineteen eighties Leeds' training ground was opposite the main entrance to the West stand - across the car park and up a grass bank. When I visit on 8th July 1981 Byron Stevenson is training with Carl Harris and Trevor Cherry. I watch them. I ask for an autograph. I don't know what to say. I visit Elland Road to see Leeds v Barnsley on 21st April 2018. The training ground is now a car park. The sound of boots brushing against the grass; of sharp tackles; the clash of shin-pads; the arm swinging friction as Don Revie walks across the mud in his sheepskin coat; the talking - man on; time; line—these sounds have been replaced by the sound of tyres on gravel; of local coaches—engines idling—unloading their passengers; the hopeful free-wheeling pre-match chatter with the only one of my boys foolish enough to follow me—and Leeds United; the rustle of plastic bags; the clatter of fencing; gate hinges; the crunch and scrape of shoes on gravel—on concrete. I look to my left—Brian Clough stood there - glared at Lorimer, at Bremner, at Giles, at Madeley.

I park the car. I get out. I do my cuffs. I don't look at my watch.  
I get my jacket out of the back. I put it on and ruffle my youngest lad's hair. He's looking across the car park -

Up the banking. To the training ground -  
Hands on hips in their purple tracksuits, waiting. Their names  
on their backs, whispering, whispering, whispering -  
Bastards. Bastards. Bastards.

'For fuck's sake,' I shout. 'Harvey over there, Stewart here. Reaney there, Cooper here. McQueen there, Hunter here. Bremner there, Cherry here. Loimer there, Giles here. Bates there, Clarke here. Madeley over there, and I'll be here. Jimmy gets the whistle. Now let's get fucking going -'

David Peace; *The Damned Utd*; p.18-19; p.21

3.

27th February 1982

Wolverhampton - West Midlands

*Here we go we're Leeds United,  
We're going to give the boys a hand,  
Stand up and sing for Leeds United,  
'Cos they are the greatest in the Land.*

Plain white paper sleeve; burgundy label. The Grundig Stereogram in the front room; I try the B-side first; I lower the needle; it catches a groove; heads towards the centre. I can hear a wind band; a complex thin line of sound; no treble or bass; compressed. What am I meant to do with this information? I can stand up and sing but how will that help? I am one hundred and fourteen miles from Elland Road and it is certain that we are no longer '...the greatest in the land'. 'Sniffer' Clarke's team are drifting toward' relegation. The automated arm lifts the needle from the record and snaps back into place. The turntable clicks, slows and stops.

We still sing this song at Elland Road. Every time I sing it I think of all of my previous visits to the stadium and of away games on dark evenings. Hearing it rumble through unfamiliar corridors; seeping out onto the pitch; into the night sky.

I feel differently now. I don't feel like singing.

4.

*24th April 2018*

*Yangon – Myanmar*

Managing Director of Leeds United–Angus Kinnear–attends a press conference in Yangon to announce a pre-season tour of Myanmar.

Elland Road Composition #1

*Travel to Myanmar.*

*Carry a sound recording device.*

*Seek out and record the sounds of political conflict.*

*of burning villages;*

*of suppressed protest;*

*of the tearing apart of communities;*

*of despair;*

*of violence;*

*of cruelty.*

*Take your recordings to Elland Road on a matchday.*

*Infiltrate the public address system.*

*Announce that you have a message for Andrea Radrizzani and the executive.*

*Tell them that you don't want to sing anymore.*

*Play your recordings for as long as you can.*

*(...at least until the world stops going 'round.)*

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Paul Whitty is a composer and researcher. He is a founder of the Sonic Art Research Unit (SARU) at Oxford Brookes and is a director of the audiograft festival. He spends a lot of his time marking out football pitches.



# THE STADIUM AS I WANT IT

1) CURVED TERRACE - IT PROVIDES INCLUSION AND CONNECTION. IT ALLOWS ME TO SEE ALL THE PEOPLE ON OUR CURVE AND HELPS ME KEEP MY ATTENTION INWARD ON OUR GROUP. A STRAIGHT TERRACE WOULD PUT ME IN AN EXCESSIVE FRONTAL RELATION WITH THE PITCH ORIENTING MY FOCUS EXCLUSIVELY TOWARDS THE GAME.

2) NO SEATING - SEATS BLOCK PARTICIPATION AND FREEZE MOVEMENT. THEY PREVENT ME FROM STANDING WHERE I WANT AND ORGANISING THE SPACE AS I WANT.

3) DEPTH OF TERRACE STEPS - I NEED SPACE, I NEED TO BE FREE TO MOVE BUT I ALSO WANT TO BE IN A TIGHTLY PACKED CROWD. GIVE ME A TERRACE WHERE EACH STEP IS DEEP, NOT NARROW. WHERE I CAN STEP BACKWARDS, MOVE AND DANCE. WHEN CHANTS ARE SUNG BY PEOPLE WHO FEEL AT HOME IN THEIR SPACE, THEY ARE MORE GROUNDED, MORE ORGANIC.

4) HEIGHT OF TERRACE STEPS - THE TERRACE STEPS NEED TO BE HIGH SO MY VOICE DOESN'T GET BLOCKED BY THE PEOPLE STANDING IMMEDIATELY IN FRONT OF ME AND CAN FLOW OVER THE TOP OF THEIR HEADS. THIS ALLOWS MY SINGING TO BE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT AT THE SAME TIME.

5) ANGLE OF SLOPE - THE STEEPER THE ANGLE, THE CLOSER I STAND TO THE CENTRE OF THE GROUP AND THE EASIER IT IS FOR THE LEADERS TO GIVE GUIDANCE AND COMMUNICATE WITH EVERYBODY. IF THE SLOPE IS SHALLOW THEN PEOPLE AT THE BACK FEEL FURTHER AWAY FROM THEIR LEADERS.

6) WALKWAYS AND EMPTY SPACES - FREE MOVEMENT ALLOWS ME TO MEET AND TALK WITH OTHER SUPPORTERS. THIS KEEPS THE SPACE SOCIAL AND MAKES IT OPEN FOR APPROPRIATION. THE STADIUM IS NOT A THEATRE VENUE. IT SHOULD FUNCTION MORE LIKE A OPEN PUBLIC SQUARE.

7) RAILINGS - THEY MUST FEATURE ENOUGH HORIZONTAL BARS SO THAT THEY CAN FUNCTION AS SUPPORT FOR THE DRUMS AS WELL AS A STRUCTURE ON WHICH LEADERS CAN STAND IN ORDER TO BE SEEN BY THE GROUP AND COMMUNICATE WITH US.

8) NO TURNSTILES - TURNSTILES ERODE PLACE POSSESSION AND SENSE OF COMMUNITY. THEY DISRUPT COLLECTIVE AGENCY AND REDUCE ME TO A SINGLE UNIT. A TURNSTILE INDIRECTLY STATES THAT I AM ENTERING A SPACE THAT IS NOT MINE. CHANTS ARE NOT FREE ANYMORE AND BECOME CONCESSIONS. THEY BECOME FAVOURS GRANTED TO US BY AUTHORITY.

9) DRUMS, MEGAPHONE AND PA SYSTEM - INSTRUMENTS FOR ORGANISING THE CHEERING SHOULD BE ALLOWED INTO THE STADIUM WITH NO RESTRICTIONS.

10) LOCATION - THE STADIUM SHOULD BE AWAY FROM COMMERCIAL COMPLEXES. NO MERCHANDISING OUTLETS SHOULD BE INCORPORATED AROUND ITS PERIMETER. MY PASSION AND PARTICIPATION WILL NOT BE EXPRESSED THROUGH RETAIL CONSUMERISM.

ULTRAS LIBERI  
STADIO LIBERO  
NO AL CALCIO MODERNO  
NO ALLA TESSERA DEL TIFOSO



## Outro

“As a child I had a running commentary in my head when I was playing. It wasn’t really my own voice It was the voice of Pierre Cangioni. Every time I heard his voice I would run towards the TV as close as I could get for as long as I could. It wasn’t that his words were so important but the tone, the accent the atmosphere was everything...

When you are immersed in the game, you don’t really hear the crowd. You can almost decide for yourself what you want to hear. You are never alone. I can hear someone shift around in their chair. I can hear someone coughing. I can hear someone whisper in the ear of the person next to them. I can imagine that I can hear the ticking of a watch.”

Zinedine Zidane

(from *Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait* by Douglas Gordon and Philippe Parreno)

“...the collective song and intoxicating sound of the crowd does not just provide an accompaniment to the beautiful action of the players, but is the sublime matrix out of which play emerges, the force field that energises the action... “

Simon Critchley

(from *What we think about when we think about football*).

